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PROJECT OXCART OPERATIONAL CONCEPT FOR FY-1965 TO FY-1966

1. MISSION:

To develop, attain, and maintain an operational capability to conduct covert aerial reconnaissance missions of denied areas.

2. DEFINITIONS:

a. Pre-Operational Period: (Prior to 1 July 1964)

The period preceding operational readiness to accomplish the primary mission.

b. Operational Period: (Subsequent to 1 July 1964)

(1) Limited Capability: (1 July 1964 to 1 January 1965)

The capability to perform limited overflight missions on a "calculated risk" basis should be achieved by 1 July 1964. Lack of experience at design operational profile with full operational configuration will be the limiting factor during this period. For planning purposes, one operational mission per month will be flown during this period.

(2) Design Capability: (1 January 1965 and on)

Six months subsequent to attaining a limited capability, the capability to accomplish four (4) operational missions per month should be achieved. A high degree of systems reliability and operational readiness will have been demonstrated prior to attaining this capability.

3. OBJECTIVES - PRE-OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

During this period the primary emphasis will be directed toward the accomplishment of the following major tasks:

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a. The development and procurement of new equipment and systems which will comprise the A-12 reconnaissance weapons system, allied systems and supporting equipment and systems.

25X1A b. The completion of construction and readying of [redacted] airdrome and supporting facilities.

c. The completion of construction and readying of facilities at designated airbases. (See Attachment #2)

d. The logistical build-up required to support the Pre-Operational Period and the continued build-up in logistical capability to support the Operational Period.

e. The planning, programming and coordination required to be ready to implement the Operational Period programs to include environmental studies.

f. The completion of specialized communications facilities required for the coordination and control of tactical and support aircraft movements.

g. The training and familiarization of support personnel with new systems and equipment preparatory to the commencement of A-12 operational missions.

h. The training of selected operational pilots and Detachment supervisory personnel and the continued testing of the A-12 reconnaissance weapons system to an operational readiness status.

i. The development and feasibility testing of air tactics and operational employment and control procedures.

4. AIRCRAFT UTILIZATION AND CONTROL:

a. A-12 Aircraft:

(1) A-12 aircraft which are instrumented as flight test beds will be under the control of [redacted] 25X1A

Flight Test Center (Lockheed Aircraft Corporation) until their requirement as instrument test beds no longer exists. At such time, to be determined by Project Headquarters, these aircraft will be transferred to the operational control of the Detachment Commander to be utilized as directed.

25X1A (2) Other A-12 aircraft will be under the control of [redacted] Flight Test Center until their airworthiness has been proven, at which time they will be released to the operational control of the Detachment Commander. Aircraft acceptance procedures will be established by Project Headquarters.

(3) A-12 aircraft which are engaged in directed missions will be under the operational direction of Project Headquarters.

(4) See Attachment #1 for A-12 Flying Hour Projection.

b. F-101 Aircraft:

These aircraft will be used as companion trainers to the A-12, as chase aircraft, and for proficiency flying for the Detachment operational pilots and supervisory personnel. Thirty-five (35) flying hours/aircraft/month will be required. These aircraft are under the operational control of the Detachment Commander.

c. T-33 and U-3B Aircraft:

These aircraft will be under the operational control of the Detachment Commander to be used as required for the following:

(1) Airlift, liaison, and other flying required to support the mission.

(2) Training and proficiency flights for Detachment rated personnel.

(3) Forty (40) flying hours/aircraft/month will be required.

d. H-43 Aircraft:

This aircraft will be used for search and rescue in the event of lost or downed Project aircraft [redacted] 25X1A This aircraft is programmed to fly thirty (30) hours/month under the operational control of the Detachment Commander to include training flights.

e. C-130 Aircraft:

This aircraft will be under the operational control of the Detachment Commander to be used for the following:

(1) Recovery aircraft to airlift necessary personnel and equipment in the event of an A-12 landing or accident [redacted]. 25X1A

(2) Airlift of engines and other equipment as required.

(3) Fulfill air evacuation requirements at [redacted]. 25X1A

(4) Eighty (80) flying hours/month will be required.

5. CONCEPT - PRE-OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

a. Developmental Flight Testing:

Planning for the current level of flight testing was based on an accelerated flight test program involving as many aircraft as are available and at a rate of from ten hours per month per aircraft with an eventual goal of up to twenty-five hours. The objective of this accelerated test program is to accumulate as much meaningful test time and therefore problem definition and resolution on as many aircraft as possible and their systems including anti-radar, payload, propulsion, stability, structure, communications, navigation, fuel, hydraulic, and inflight refueling in order to minimize the calendar time required to attain an operational capability.

Aircraft numbers 121 and 122 are devoted solely to continuous flight testing and are currently involved in envelope extension, propulsion system matching, and heat soak data collection for surfacing problems attendant with sustained high mach flight. As required other appropriate aircraft are utilized from time to time for the flight test development of specific components or systems. In addition to the flight effort itself a very substantial part of the engine development program is currently devoted to investigating, defining, and resolving problems being surfaced during flight.

b. Flying Training:

(1) The basic A-12 flying training program consists of 20 training missions and 54 + 00 flying hours. This program is divided into 8 transition type missions and 12 advanced operational readiness type training missions designed to provide a high degree of proficiency in all operational phases of the mission profile. This includes day and night transition flying, instrument flying, aerial refueling, navigation, photographic flight line flying, systems operation and emergency procedures.

(2) Initial transition training and air refueling checkout will be conducted in a Special Operating Area [redacted] More advanced training will be conducted within the United States along special corridors coordinated with FAA and NORAD. 25X1A

25X1A [redacted]

(3) All A-12 test and training missions will be planned to launch and recover [redacted] All flights will be flown "black" (unfiled) on a local flight clearance. Specialized procedures are in effect to minimize inadvertent compromise of the mission vehicle and its capabilities and to provide for necessary air traffic control and safety. 25X1A

c. Operational Readiness Training:

Procedures for mission implementation and control will be established and exercised in conjunction with flying training. Through the medium of frequent Headquarters planned and controlled Command Post Exercises, Mission Generation and Mission Reporting procedures will be developed. Operational readiness training will culminate with a 3 air refueling mission including deployments of KC-135 aircraft, personnel and equipment to designated forward bases; i.e.,

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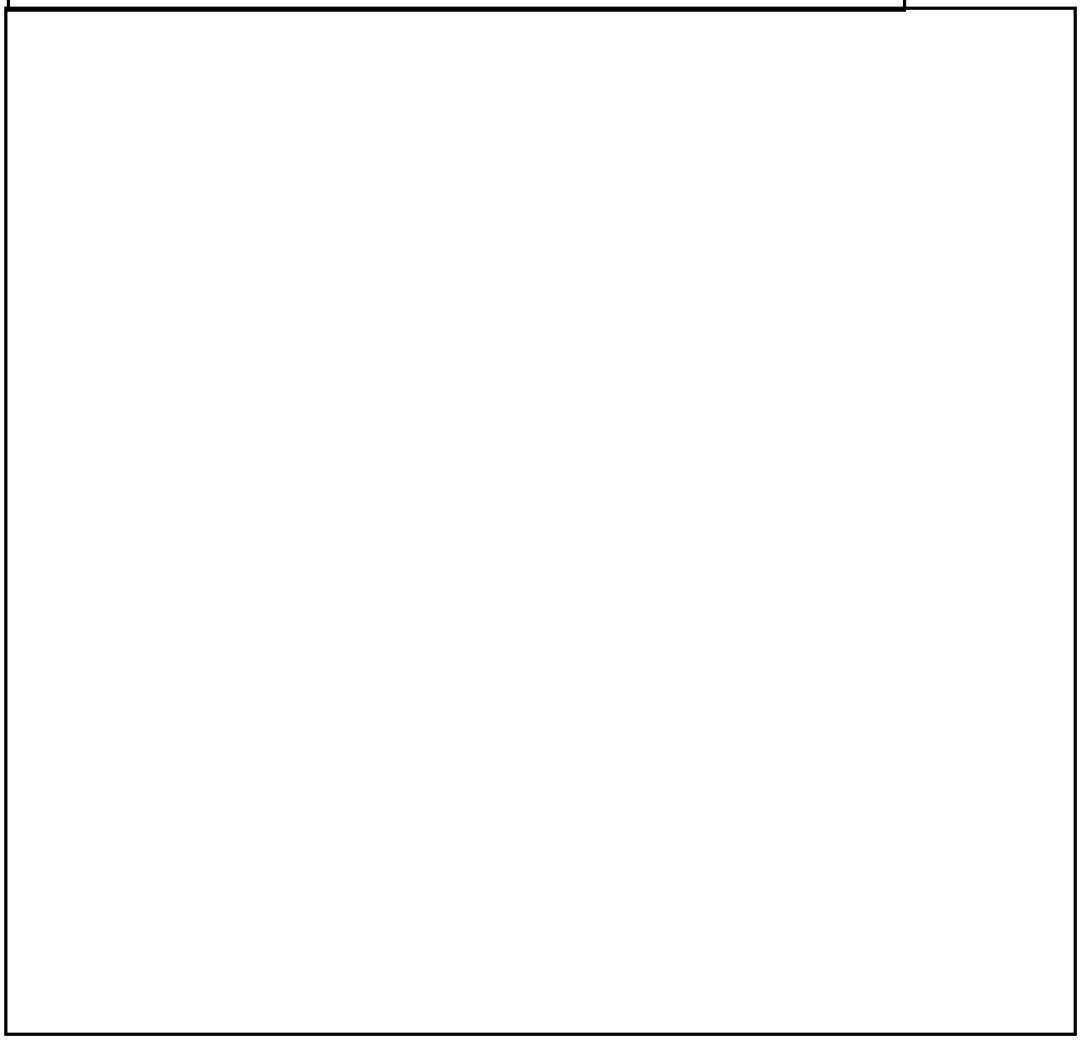
d.



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6. OBJECTIVES - OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

During this period the following major tasks will be accomplished:

a. The execution of covert aerial reconnaissance missions of denied areas as directed.

b. The continued testing of equipment, systems and procedures in order to improve the operational capability and reliability.

c. The continued proficiency training of operational pilots and Detachment personnel.

7. CONCEPT - OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

a. A total of twelve (12) A-12 aircraft will be required to support planned operations. All aircraft will be 25X1A located [redacted] which will be used as the permanent launch and/or support base for forward area stagings as required. Following is the anticipated disposition of the 12 assigned aircraft:

(1) Two aircraft to remain as test beds for continued research and development.

(2) One aircraft undergoing IRAN.

(3) One aircraft (dual seat) for training.

(4) Eight aircraft in the operational fleet to be used for operational missions and proficiency training.

b. Operational missions will be planned, directed and controlled by Project Headquarters against approved targets received from the COMOR. The attaining of political approvals and arranging for necessary mission support will be accomplished by Project Headquarters.

c. Operational missions will be planned utilizing the primary concept of A-12 prestrike and poststrike at 25X1A [redacted] with a maximum of 3 aerial refuelings enroute. An airborne or ground spare A-12 will be planned for each mission. If a deeper penetration is required, the following additional concepts of operation may be employed as "contingency options."

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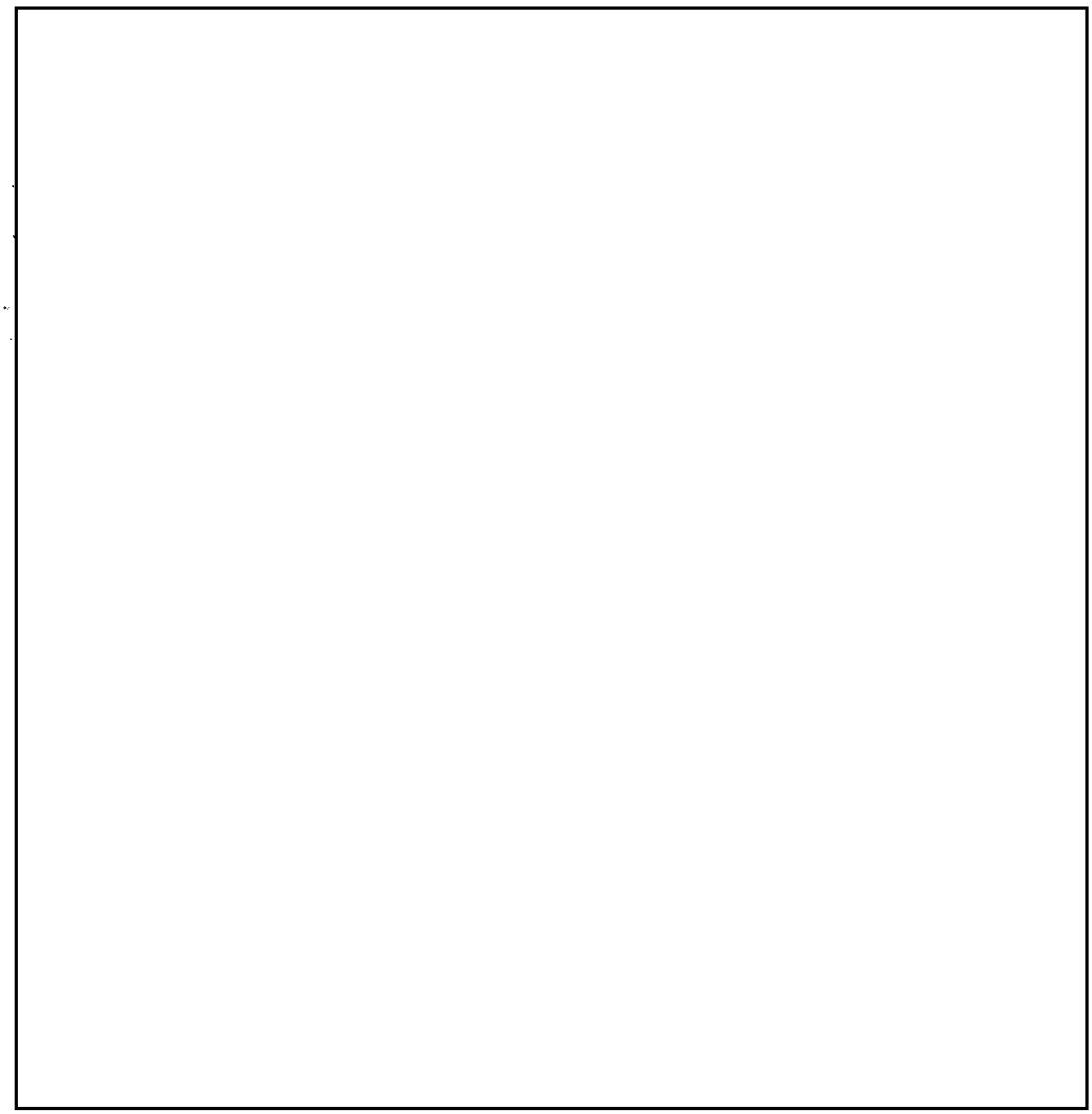

8. OPERATIONAL MISSION PLANNING:

a. Upon receipt of higher authority approval for an overflight, Project Headquarters staff will accomplish mission planning against specific approved targets received from COMOR. Intelligence information will be supplied by all Community services. Weather Central will provide weather support. Following basic A-12 performance factors will be used in flight planning:

25X1

(1) Cruise Speed - MACH 3.2

[redacted]

b. Missions will be planned and flown along preplanned, "canned" departure and withdrawal routes. The penetration or overflight leg of denied territory may vary dependent on target location and latest weather information, specifically as pertains to cloud cover in the target area. The finalized flight plan will be forwarded to

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[redacted] to complete the pilot's film strip and emergency maps. It is planned that by 1 April 1964, the majority of the flight plan will be accomplished through use of computers supplemented by manual information. It is programmed that by 1 January 1965, the entire flight plan will be prepared by automation. However, Project Headquarters will at all times maintain a back-up capability of manually producing a complete flight plan.

9. OPERATIONAL COMMAND/CONTROL:

a. A-12 Aircraft:

Project Headquarters will direct and control A-12 operational missions through the use of Policy Directives, Mission Directives, Tactical Doctrine and Reports Control once mission generation has begun. The responsibility for mission implementation and detailed supervision will be vested with the

25X1A

[redacted] Detachment Commander.

b. KC-135 Aircraft:

As requested by Project Headquarters, Headquarters SAC will be responsible for providing tanker support at specified overseas bases at specified times. Tanker mission execution will be accomplished through Headquarters SAC as requested by Project Headquarters. When advised by Project Headquarters that the operational mission support is completed, Headquarters SAC will redeploy the tanker force to the ZI.

10. OPERATIONAL MISSION GENERATION:

The following major actions will be accomplished in the generation of each operational mission. Timing of these actions may very dependent upon the operational employment concept used and as more experience is gained in defining mission "countdown" requirements.

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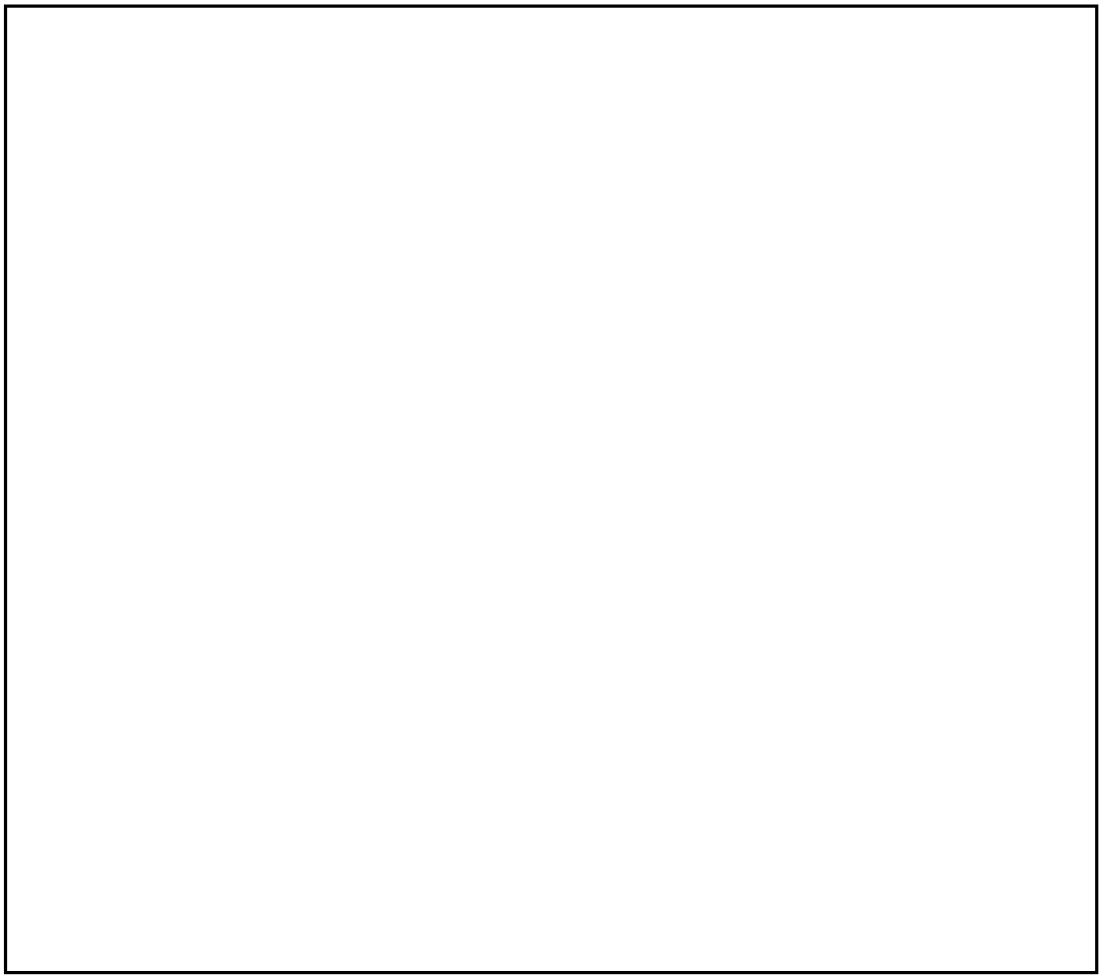

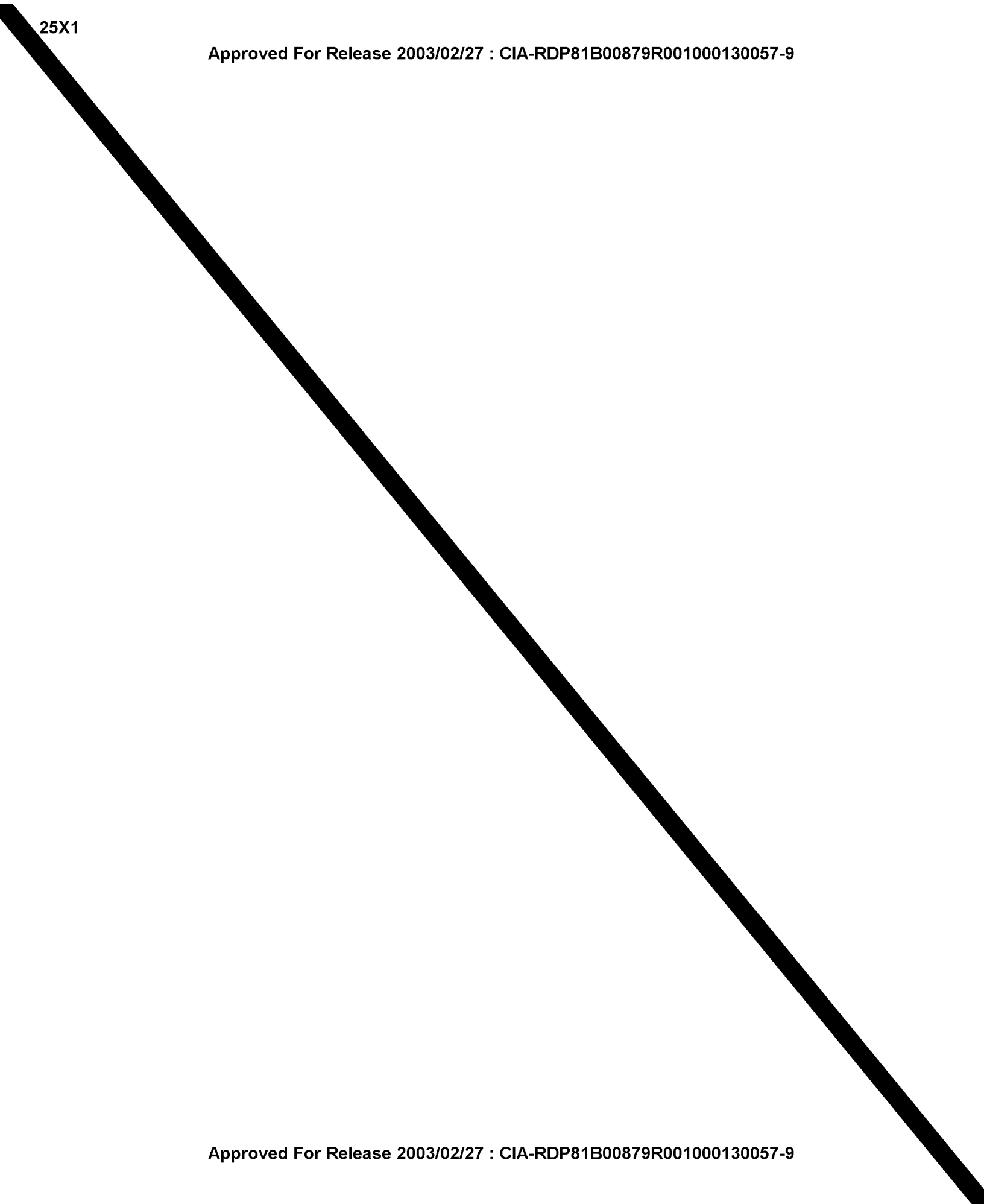

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[redacted]

11. SURVIVABILITY:

a. The probability of detection and intercept of the A-12 vehicle during operational missions is being thoroughly studied and evaluated. Both passive and active detection and tracking capabilities are being considered. Intercept capabilities of the manned fighter, surface-to-air missile and infra-red homing devices are also being assessed.

b. Preliminary evaluations of the above indicate the SA-2 and the anti-ballistic missile may be the most critical threat during an operational mission.

12. WEATHER SUPPORT:

a. Weather forecasts will be provided by WECEN as required by Project Headquarters. Upon receipt of these forecasts, weather briefings will be prepared and presented to Project Headquarters staff personnel for mission planning and decision making. Cloud cover in the target areas, and over-all forecasts of aerial refueling areas and terminal weather are all critical factors in the operational weather picture. Any one of these factors could cause mission failure, therefore, weather must be forecasted as favorable before mission generation can be allowed to progress.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

b. Lead time is the most significant factor in forecast reliability. Since the supporting tanker unit must be alerted of a pending A-12 mission in sufficient time to accomplish necessary actions (crews alerted, schedules established, aircraft prepared, etc.), the tanker pre-deployment alert forecast will be presented approximately 54 hours before H-Hour (take-off time of the mission

vehicle). The latest available analyzed data at this time is at least 12 hours old, resulting in a requirement for a weather prediction 66 hours hence. When considering a particular area of interest, this forecast is used only as a trend indicator noting improvement or deterioration from current weather conditions.

c. The weather forecast reliability will increase as the mission generation count-down continues until at the "GO-NO-GO" decision, six hours before mission vehicle take-off, forecasting reliability should approximate 92% accuracy.

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OXC/OSA [redacted] :kb (19 Feb 64)

Attachments - 2
As noted above

Distribution:
#1 - AD/OSA
#2-3 C/B&F/OSA
#4 - C/MD/OSA
#5 - C/COMMO/OSA
#6 - D/TECH/OSA
#7 - C/SD/OSA
#8 - D/FA/OSA
#9-10 OXC/OSA
#11- RB/OSA
#12- D/FA/PLANS/OSA
#13- C/PS/OSA

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